

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DUSSEL 00555 221510Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-02
INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04
USIA-15 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10
PRS-01 PA-02 /117 W

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R 221440Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3106

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

UNCLAS DUSSELDORF 0555

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ENRG, GW

SUBJECT: SHORT WORK IN GERMAN COAL MINING

1. THE BIGGEST GERMAN HARD COAL PRODUCING COMPANY, THE RUHR-KOHLE A.G. (RAG) ANNOUNCED THAT BEGINNING MAY 1, 1977 ABOUT 100,000 OF ITS 145,000 LABOR FORCE WILL WORK 10 SHIFTS LESS THAN NORMAL UNTIL THE END OF 1977. MANAGEMENT AND WORKS COUNCIL HAVE AGREED TO THIS SOLUTION, WHICH WILL REDUCE COAL PRODUCTION BY A TOTAL OF 2,7 MILLION TONS TO ADAPT PRODUCTION TO SALES. MINERS' EARNINGS WILL NOT BE AFFECTED BECAUSE OF VARIOUS OFFSETTING ARRANGEMENTS. RAG COKING PLANTS, BY-PRODUCT PLANTS AND APPRENTICES WILL BE EXEMPTED FROM THE CUT IN WORKING TIMES.

2. THE POWER COPANIES IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC HAVE AGREED TO
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PAGE 02 DUSSEL 00555 221510Z

BUY AN ANNUAL AVERAGE OF 33 MILLION TONS OF HARD COAL FOR THE TEN YEARS BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 1978. THIS REPRESENTS A CONSIDERABLE INCREASE OVER THE ANTICIPATED CONSUMPTION LEVEL OF 27-28 MILLION TONS IN 1977 OR THE ACTUAL 30 MILLION TON LEVEL OF 1976. IT IS BASED ON THE EXPECTATION OF INCREASED RELIANCE ON COAL FOR POWER GENERATION, IN LIGHT OF PUBLIC PROTESTS AND COURT RULINGS AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS AND

POSSIBLE FURTHER OIL PRICE INCREASES. HOWEVER, RAG ARGUES THAT A LEGAL REGULATION IS NEEDED TO SUBSTANTITATE THE VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT BETWEEN COAL AND POWER COMPANIES.

3. COMMENT: DESPITE INCREASED OIL PRICES, GERMAN COAL REMAINS UNCOMPETITIVE WITH OTHER ENERGY SOURCES, UNLESS THE POWER PLANTS ARE LOCATED IN THE PROXIMITY OF THE COAL MINES. COAL POWER PLANTS NEAR THE COAST WILL FIND IT CHEAPER TO USE IMPORTED COAL, AND THE COSTS OF SHIPPING COAL TO POWER PLANTS IN SOUTHERN GERMANY ARE PROHIBITIVE.DUX

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Message Attributes

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